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Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday, November 19, 1942.

QUESTION BOX
What breakfast fruits in wartime?
More ways to use cranberries?
Stuff bird with cornbread?

ANSWERS FROM
Home economists of the
U. S. Department of Agriculture

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The war has brought many changes in food shopping. Very often you just have to take what you can get in the stores and make it do. Questions this week show that women are trying to meet these war-time changes and still feed their families for good health. One question today is about breakfast fruits. Another asks about cooking cranberries without using much sugar. And still another inquires about corn-bread stuffing for chicken. The answers are from the food specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

First, here's a letter from a homemaker who is concerned about the scarcity of breakfast fruits. She writes: "We live in a small town. The grocer is often out of oranges and grapefruit. Dried fruits like prunes are also scarce lately. So are canned fruits and tomato juice. Of course, I have some home-canned fruit. But we counted on that for desserts. What can we have for breakfast fruit this winter?"

The food specialists reply: What about apples and grapes? They say apples have been so plentiful this year that twice they have gone on the list of Victory Food Specials. You'll see plenty of apples on the market for some months ahead. Serve them as they are for breakfast...or as applesauce...or serve them baked or fried. Grapes of several kinds will be on sale for some weeks yet. And cranberries are coming in more and more. You can cook cranberries for juice for breakfast. Cranberry juice needs sweetening, and you can sweeten with part honey or sirup.

(over)

You'll see a few more dried prunes and raisins soon. You might even use lemonade occasionally for breakfast. You can sometimes get lemons when you can't buy oranges. Hot water and lemon juice, hardly sweetened at all, is a favorite with many for starting off the day.

However, while it is desirable to serve fruit for breakfast, it is not essential. The necessary thing is to serve at some time during the day enough foods that are rich in vitamin C. Cabbage, kale, spinach, and other leafy vegetables are good sources of vitamin C, and so are white and sweetpotatoes, baked or boiled in their jackets. Use extra amounts of such foods when you can't get citrus fruits and tomatoes.

Now for that question about cranberries. "I notice plenty of cranberries in the market, but how can I cook them without using a great deal of sugar?"

Just a few weeks ago the food specialists suggested using cranberries for juice, and making them into a sauce, sweetened with part honey and part sugar. You can serve cranberry sauce on ice cream, on puddings, and in fruit salads. Here are some more ideas: Ever try cranberry shortcake? To make it, boil 4 cups of washed and drained cranberries with 1 cup of honey, until tender. Add a little salt. Prepare a rich biscuit dough by a standard recipe, but add a little sugar to the dough. Roll the dough about a fourth inch thick. Cut it into rounds, butter half of them, and place one unbuttered round on top of a buttered one. (The buttering helps them come apart easily.) Bake in a hot oven until lightly browned. Split, and cover with some of the cooked cranberries, and serve.

Here's another idea -- cranberry muffins. Add one cup of washed and dried cranberries to an ordinary muffin recipe containing some sugar. Roll the berries in a little of the sugar before you fold them into the batter. And don't stir the mixture any more than you have to. Maybe you'd like a standard muffin recipe to use with cranberries...or any other berries, for that matter. Here's what goes into muffins: Sifted flour, 2 cups...baking powder, 3 teaspoons...salt, one-half

teaspoon...sugar, 2 to 4 tablespoons...milk, three-fourths cup...1 egg...fat, 2 to 4 tablespoons. This recipe has a little less liquid than the rule for plain muffins because the berries are juicy.

And here's an easy relish made of cranberries. Grind 1 pound of washed and drained cranberries with 1 whole orange, - that is, the pulp and rind. (Of course, you leave out the seeds.) Mix with three-fourths to 1 cup of strained honey, and add one-fourth teaspoon of salt. Mix well. This relish keeps 2 or 3 weeks if stored in a tight jar in the refrigerator.

Last question: "I have heard of using cornbread stuffing for a chicken. As we are going to have roast chicken for Thanksgiving, I thought it might make a change for the family to have a different stuffing from usual. How do you make cornbread stuffing?"

Cornbread stuffing is easy to make, and you will find it goes particularly well with a braised chicken. A braised chicken, you know, cooks in a covered roaster instead of an open pan, so that it partly cookes by steam. You can braise either a tender bird, or a somewhat older bird, after steaming it.

About making the cornbread stuffing: For a 5-pound bird, you'll need three-fourths cup of chopped celery...one-fourth cup of chopped parsley...and one small chopped onion, all cooked together for a few minutes in 6 tablespoons of melted butter or other fat. Add one quart of cornbread crumbs. Season with one-fourth to one-half teaspoon of thyme, and salt. Mix well, and stuff into the bird.

That finishes the questions and answers for today. More next week.

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